

## Interview with Walter E. Jenkins Jr.

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

WALTER E. JENKINS, JR.

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

Initial interview date: February 20, 1991

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*Q: I wonder if you could give me a little of your background, where you come from?*

JENKINS: Well, I do tend to be a little bit mixed up, because I came from Texas originally, and in my teens I moved to New England, Boston, and then attended university there at Harvard. And so in my guts I'm a Texan, and in my mind I tend to be a New Englander.

*Q: When did you graduate from Harvard?*

JENKINS: I was the Class of '40. But since I wanted to go to Hawaii with my parents, where my father was assigned as a Lieut. Colonel...

*Q: So you were an Army brat.*

JENKINS: I was an Army brat, right. I attended the University of Hawaii two years, but dear old Harvard gave me credit for only one, so I actually left Harvard in '41, Class of '40.

*Q: Oh, that was a good class to be in. What were you studying while you were at Harvard and at the University of Hawaii?*

JENKINS: International law and relations, mostly.

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*Q: What had attracted you towards this particular field?*

JENKINS: Well, as I pointed out, I tended to be a little mixed up, like a lot of us are. I really strongly thought I might go to the Yale School of Forestry someday, because I love the out-of-doors and nature. But I think the experience in childhood in the Philippines and then later in Hawaii, and the Boy Scout World Jamboree in '33 in Hungary, steered me towards foreign affairs. Well, what finally clinched it was my World War II experience in China.

*Q: Well, did you have any experience of either the Far East or Europe during the war before you graduated from college?*

JENKINS: Well, before graduating from college, the contact with the Far East was basically my early childhood in the Philippines, during which we did visit China, and then my late teens in Hawaii, where I associated with many persons of Japanese, Chinese and Korean heritage at the University of Hawaii as well as during my summer job in the pineapple fields.

*Q: Well, now, you graduated in 1941. What happened to you then?*

JENKINS: Well, I did take ROTC, so I went to summer camp at Ft. Devens during the summer of 1941. And then I was called up for one year of active duty. I thought that'd be great—but of course within a month, Pearl Harbor. And so I went into the Army, field artillery, for the duration.

*Q: Did you get any sort of international experience while you were in the Army?*

JENKINS: Yes, I spent two years actually, until the end of the war, in China with the Stilwell Y- Force and later, the Chinese Combat Command, training Chinese and then taking them into operations.

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*Q: Because we're looking at sort of the whole foreign relations field here, not just limited to the Foreign Service, could you tell me about some of your experiences in this as an instructor under the Stilwell command—I mean, it's a very controversial, very difficult period—what you were doing and how you saw the situation at that time.*

JENKINS: Yes. The first part of the experience was at an artillery training center at Kan Hai- Tze, just outside of K'un-ming, in which we would train officers and a corps of noncommissioned officers in the basics of artillery, and then take them out to their battalions and help them train their battalions in artillery, and then would accompany them in the mission of opening up the Burma Road, stopping the Japanese offensive in Guangxi or protecting the border with Vietnam.

Well, I did get some very special feelings at that time. In K'un-ming was one of the best of the Nationalist forces, the Fifth Army. It became quite clear that the Chinese government under Chiang Kai-shek, was less interested in using them to open the Burma Road than for keeping an eye on the provincial Yunnanese forces under Warlord Governor Lung Y#n. And I began to get the impression that one of the key things of concern to Chiang and the Kuomintang was this separatism of warlords and how you keep them under control. So some of his best units were actually used for that purpose in our region of southwest China.

Then, on accompanying the officers and non-Coms of the 18th Artillery Regiment to a training area near the Burma Road, I noted they did a good job in training their troops, but it became quite clear from the lectures of the political officers that what they were really training for was a post-war confrontation with the Communists. This unit never did go down to open up the Burma Road, but was transferred east to Guangxi to face the Japanese there. Thus, I got a second impression that really a lot of this training and preparation was for post-war consolidation of Nationalist authority.

*Q: What was your impression of Stilwell when he was replaced by Wedemeyer?*

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JENKINS: My feeling was that Stilwell really knew China but he couldn't harbor any nonsense, either from the "Little Peanut," as he called Chiang Kai-shek, or from us. I remember when we arrived. We had flown over from Miami, and I was the junior officer, the captain. All the others were older lieutenant colonels and colonels. We waited in the headquarters in K'un-ming, and after a half hour Stilwell came in, with his campaign hat and his riding crop. He looked around, finally saying, "You know, I asked for some first rate officers, and all I get is a bunch of broken-down old brass." This was our first welcome by General Stilwell.

But then we learned to respect him and emulate him, in the military sense—we too began wearing campaign hats and carrying riding crops.

And so I think that he might have been on target as far as his assessment of Chiang and what we were trying to do; but he didn't fully appreciate all of the political factors involved, like China's tendency to go after local warlords, his felt need to finish things off with the Communists after the war, and so forth. He didn't fully appreciate the political complications in my opinion. He wanted Chinese participation in defeating the Japanese, while Chiang focused on the Communists and warlords and was sure the U.S. could take care of the Japanese.

*Q: You were there for how long?*

JENKINS: A little over two years.

*Q: You left when?*

JENKINS: I arrived in early September 1943 and left China in late September of 1945.

*Q: So the war was over.*

JENKINS: Yes.

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*Q: Were you involved at all in, you might say, the preparations for the next war, the civil war there?*

JENKINS: Yes, very indirectly. By this time a Lieut. Colonel, I decided to stay on a while and to take a surrender team to Han-k'ou. We had an OSS team to go in with us. They were to parachute from our plane and make sure the airfield was secure; then we'd land and accept the Japanese surrender and collect a lot of nice Samurai swords. But we never got there, because all of the planes were being used to transport Chinese forces to Manchuria, to counter the Soviet presence there and their support in bringing Chinese Communist troops up there. It became apparent that things were really building up for this Nationalist-Communist conflict at the end of the war. So I had my required points and came home.

*Q: You earn points for military service overseas.*

JENKINS: When you got a hundred points, you were eligible to go home.

*Q: Then what happened? You didn't join the State Department until 1948, so what happened in between there?*

JENKINS: Well, I went back to graduate school, international law and relations at Harvard, and was studying hard, when I got a call from Bill McAfee in Chinese Affairs at the State Department (he had been Wedemeyer's aide). He asked, "Would you be interested in a job in the State Department? There's a job opening up because one of our boys is going over to USIS in Han-k'ou."

I said, "Sure." So I came down for an interview. Fantastic. State was then in what is now the Executive Office Building. I had my interviews. And then the officer in charge said, "Incidentally, our president is meeting the Mexican president across the street at Blair House. Let's go out on the balcony, have tea and watch the parade and ceremony."

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I replied, "Okay, let's do it." We did, and my overall reaction was, "Boy, this is the job for me."

But the Congress knocked out the USIA post in Han-k'ou, so I had to wait an additional year, and joined State in '48. By then State had moved to the former War Department Building at 21st and C Streets, so I didn't have tea on the balcony that frequently.

Meanwhile, I spent a pleasant year teaching at the University of Texas in Austin.

*Q: First, you were a civil servant, from '48 to '50, is that right?*

JENKINS: From '48 to '50 I was a Civil Servant and then became a Foreign Service Officer (FSO) in 1950.

*Q: What were you doing? What were your responsibilities?*

JENKINS: Well, Bill McAfee knew my military experience in China, and he wanted a helper. He was political-military. And basically my job was to help him follow the course of the civil war. These were turbulent times in China, of course, and it wasn't going well for the Nationalists.

*Q: Forty-eight was really kind of the end of the line.*

JENKINS: Right up into '49, when they went over to Taiwan. And so we followed the course of the military operations, and also I monitored the \$125 million military aid program we were giving to the Nationalist Chinese. Those two jobs kept me pretty busy, and it was a fascinating period.

*Q: What was the impression at the time? You know, so much has been written about the China hands and all this, but as a practical measure, I mean, here you are on the ground working on the East Asia...it was East Asia at that time I guess?*

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JENKINS: Yes, it was the Far Eastern Bureau (FE) and the “China Desk” (CA).

*Q: What was the feeling at the time about the Communists and the Nationalists—who was going to win, what American interests were and all that sort of thing?*

JENKINS: We were not all of one mind, but I think we were following it very closely. China language officer Jack Service wasn't there, and Oliver Edmund Clubb wasn't, but two others, Phil Sprouse and Tony Freeman, were. They were my bosses. We saw various options. As these dispatches came in from the China posts—from Oliver Edmund Clubb, Jack Service, Bob Service, Al Siebens and others- -we began to see the Nationalist side disintegrating and contemplated what could be done about it.

For instance, on the military side, Chiang had taken away command of ten divisions—American-equipped and trained in China during the World War II—from Sun Li-jen, who was a VMI graduate but just too objective— and gave the troops and command to Fu Tso-yi, who had been a warlord. Fu Tso-yi eventually defected, with the 10 divisions, to the Communists.

And then you began to see warlord cliques develop and split off. One was the Guangxi Clique, led by Li Chi-shen and Li Tsung-jen, who was vice president to Chiang Kai-shek at the time. And you got a feeling from the reporting that the Guangxi Clique was trying to join hands with Fu Tso-yi and Governor Lung Y#n of Yunnan to provide an alternative to Chiang.

So these reports poured in from the so-called China Hands. But you also had, on this side, the “China Lobby,” led by John Foster Dulles and other likeminded political figures.

*Q: Senator Knowland, Walter Judd, who was at that time a congressman.*

JENKINS: Right. And so you could see three alternatives, at least I could, and you could see people thinking about them. Should there be a support of alternative groupings

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the Guangxi Clique and other factions? "Look, the Chinese Communists are obviously winning," others would say, "why not establish contact with them, establish diplomatic relations, and wean them away from the world-wide monolithic Communist movement?" And then you had the viewpoint, represented by the China Lobby, "Follow through with Chiang to the very end, even though he had retired to Taiwan, and someday we'll return to the mainland," which became the slogan.

*Q: Were you feeling any particular pressure on you? I mean, was this really some people sitting down and weighing these things and trying to figure out what do we do? Or was there pressure to "think right"?*

JENKINS: Not from the hierarchy. No, I think there was objectivity...from my point of view, and remember, I was a relatively new junior officer.

*Q: Oh, no, I understand. No, but this is important to get this feeling.*

JENKINS: But in the broader political environment you did have the feeling of pressure from the Judds and the Knowlands that we mustn't be "traitors," and you began to feel that Jack Service and others were not exactly welcome in this environment.

*Q: But did you have the feeling that you were getting good reporting out of China?*

JENKINS: I felt we were getting excellent balanced reporting out of China, even including that wonderful jewel from Tihwa, capital of way-out Xinjiang. The consul had just isolated himself out there, and the dispatches came in only once every six months. And it became apparent (because I read the dispatches first) that what he might be writing were chapters of a book about the situation in Xinjiang. The villain of the piece was a Russian named Alexis, who lived in the area. Finally, as the civil war approached its end, the consul had to pull out, with his deputy who was an OSS type, through Tibet into India.



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*Q: But you didn't have the feeling at the time, this '48 to '50 time, that you were in a bureau almost besieged by the political right in the United States?*

JENKINS: As a junior officer focusing on the military I was perhaps less aware of the siege. But I had a feeling that Oliver Edmund Clubb, the Services and others, and maybe my two bosses, Phil Sprouse and Tony Freeman, were feeling this pressure a lot more than I was. Of course we all know what happened to the Services; and John Patton Davies was another. And Tony Freeman, who was one of the best China language officers I've ever known, of course, left the Far East and became ambassador to Mexico eventually. And Phil Sprouse did go out to Cambodia eventually. But their careers with China or anything important in that region was ended. And you could sort of feel that by 1950.

*Q: When did you leave the China desk and go to Germany?*

JENKINS: Well, both Phil and Tony, who had been encouraging me to go to China language school, realized that it was all over in China, and that young officers would not serve there for many years to come. So something came up with the High Commission in Germany, (HICOG), and they said, "That looks like a good opportunity; if you're interested, take it." HICOG wanted to train a group of young candidates waiting to be Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), to serve in Germany as Kreis Resident Officers, which in essence was to be county representative for the High Commission throughout the American Zone. So after family consultation, I joined 26 other FSO candidates to attend the Foreign Service Institute for three months of orientation and German language study, and then off to Germany.

*Q: So you left about when?*

JENKINS: We left in the spring of 1950.

*Q: So you weren't on the China desk at the time of the Korean War.*

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JENKINS: No, I was not. Not until I went to Taiwan later. I was in FSI, then Germany.

*Q: When you went to Germany, you were a Kreis Officer, which, as I understand, was really sort of a device to get the American military occupation officers out of the military occupation duty, for eventual turnover, and it was thought best to civilianize this (with a lot of heart-rending, because there was some pretty good billets there for the military officer). So when you arrived, what were you doing? How were you received, you might say? How did you work with our military, because it was still an occupation at that time, and then what were you doing?*

JENKINS: Well, we were trying to really appreciate what we were doing while we were still in FSI. And I remember that at our graduation party there were two of the language instructors, husband and wife, of Saxony lower nobility. They asked, "Well, what are you going to do as a resident officer?"

I replied, "Well, we're going to be liaison between the U.S. military and the local government, but mainly we're going to be involved in what we call a reorientation program. We'll have youth programs, women's programs, film programs in the school and we'll have public forums throughout the Kreis (county) to get people to participate." And she said, "Oh, you mean you're going to make them democrats?"

And I said, "Yeah: oh, we're going to try."

And she laughed and pointed at me and said to the others, "This young man thinks he's going to make democrats out of the Germans (chuckle, chuckle)."

But we got over there and we started out. We made a real try. I would say, at first, the American military incumbents, who had the jobs we were taking over, were very suspicious of us; they thought we were going to take over. And so the relationship was not too warm at first. But a goodly number were retained in HICOG as civilians. They

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warmed up after many began to realize, "Well, I'm not being eliminated, I'll stay." And so we branched out with them into our democratization program, and occasionally "goofed".

I remember I was an understudy in Mannheim, actually in nearby Weinheim, and I was trying to get started with the local youth organization. There was a Jungenring, youth circle, which was having a fest and sport competition. The chairman of the Jungenring was a very handsome, ash-blond boy, and I cottoned up to him and said, "Is there anything I can do to help?"

He looked at me a bit skeptically and said, "Well, you know, we need some prizes for the kids who win these races. Do you have any chocolates, candies or such things?"

And I replied, "Oh, sure." And I got some D-ration bars from our military and I told my driver, "Let's go over and see Herr Strasser at the old Rathaus."

The driver asked, "You know where that is?"

In response to my negative reply, he said, "Well, that's where the Communists and trade unions are located."

Well, it turns out that Herr Strasser was a Communist. But he had been elected by all groups. protestant, catholic to be chairman of the Jungenring. And so on delivering the D-ration I made my first faux pas, but it wasn't too bad, for I made friends with several other youth leaders.

There are other anecdotes of that type, too. But gradually, when we moved in to our regular counties, which for me was Schw#bisch Halle in Baden-W#rttemberg, the reorientation program took shape. And we did have our forum programs; we did have our ladies' program; we worked with the youth and had a school film program. It seemed to be taking hold.

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Now, I don't mean that we “made democrats” out of the Germans necessarily; but if you look at it in the context of the broader initiatives we were pursuing— for instance, the new constitution of West Germany was very carefully devised with our advice, and Americans helped them a lot in establishing a democratically elected parliamentary system, a federal system that was truly federal, and a party election system with a five- percent rule, meaning that a party had to have at least five percent in the election to be represented in Parliament, which prevented a lot of the splintering characteristic of the elections in Italy and France. Against the backdrop of these broader developments, what we were doing in the Kreise seemed to fit in. And so my impression was that, although there were a lot of problems, we were seeing eye-to-eye with them and they were making progress toward democratic institutions.

*Q: Then you got yanked back there to your China side, didn't you, at that point? I have you going to Taipei from '52 to '55.*

JENKINS: We actually arrived in January '53. I was quite, quite sure I was going to continue to serve in Germany for another tour. And I was transferred to the political section of the High Commission (HICOG) in Bonn in the summer of '52.

*Q: Ah, well, then let's talk a little about that.*

JENKINS: Well, it would have to be “a little.” Because HICOG had the authority to transfer us, as junior Foreign Service officers, directly from a Kreis to Bonn, then notify the Department of the reassignment. But the dear administrative officer didn't do it by wire, but by surface pouch. And so I was doing my first job of sorting out files in the political section, when all of a sudden a cable came in stating that I was being transferred to Taipei. Well, John Patton Davies, the old China Hand, who was then head of the political section, wrote a beautiful cable trying to retain me in Bonn. But a fatuous cable came back which said that the Department feels that young officers should have a variety of experiences, and since Mr. Jenkins has already served in China, the Department feels he ought to go back

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there. There were condolences. One of my friends was sorting through his cables in the file room and said, "I'm awfully sorry to see you go."

I replied, "Well, Pete, it has to be, I guess."

And then, looking at a cable, he said, "I'll be damned, I'm transferred to Taiwan, too!" So we went to Taiwan on the same plane.

*Q: What was your impression, before we leave that, about how the civilian American side was doing, both at...well, it wasn't even an embassy, it was still High Commission, wasn't it?*

JENKINS: It was formally the High Commission because the "contractual agreements" negotiated with the Federal Republic were not ratified until 1955 because of French opposition. But we operated as an Embassy. Within the U.S. Zone the civilian American side was doing well, but internationally there were problems— East-West problems with the USSR, impact of the Korean War, stalemate over the "European Defense Community", etc.

*Q: Well, then you went to Taipei. What were you doing there?*

JENKINS: Well, in Taipei, my initial job, after several months training in Washington, was to be administrative officer for the embassy, which I did for about six, seven months. And then I replaced the person who was the political-military officer, again because of my background in political-military work.

*Q: What was the situation when you were there? We're talking about '53 to '55, in Taiwan. I mean, the Korean War was going full blast. I'm sure the wounds from the civil war had not really healed at all. How did you see the situation there?*

JENKINS: Well, as you say, it was a pretty turbulent time in the Far East. And of course we were in Taiwan with our military assistance program, and we were also in Korea.

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And by this time mainland China was also involved in the Korean War: and this had its repercussions in Taiwan. There was much emphasis on “return to the mainland,” parading, training, and maneuvers to emphasize that goal. But there was also some internal upheaval and competition for authority on the island.

I remember going over with our navy during the evacuation of the Tachen Islands. Chiang Ching-kuo, the older son of Chiang Kai-shek, was there and I got to know him somewhat. And then I went to Quemoy, which is just opposite Fujian Province on the mainland—very close, artillery distance—with Wild Bill Donovan and Maxwell Taylor to look over the situation there in terms of its viability under the Nationalists. There was considerable military tension at that time.

Also, there was internal tension. Chiang Ching-kuo, the older son, was having a struggle with Madame Chiang and her son, Chiang Wei-kuo, for a position of power and influence on Chiang Kai-shek. And it had its impact on the diplomatic corps, too. For example, when Madame Chiang organized a fashion show, supported by Wei-kuo, and invited all the diplomats there, Ching-kuo surreptitiously got his bully boys to disrupt the fashion show, turnover diplomats' vehicles, while appealing to the public that the fashion show was a frivolous event at the time of serious civil and Korean war with the Communists.

Also, Sun Li-Jen, the VMI-educated general who trained the troops that finally opened up the Burma Road during W.W.II, was put under house arrest in 1954. And two of his generals were sent to Green Island, a detention re-education camp for political prisoners. I remember going to Green Island with a U.S. Army colleague and Chiang Ching-kuo, who controlled security for the Nationalist Government. During the tour of the camp he pointed out that they were reforming the resident political dissidents, and that ninety-five percent of them, after re-education in the Three People's Principles, returned to Taiwan. Well, that was interesting so my colleague and I asked, “Well, what happens to the other five percent?”

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"Oh, we don't hurt them. No, actually, we give them a boat, food supplies and a radio, and send them back to the Chinese mainland. And after three or four days, we start sending radio messages to them asking: 'When are you going to report?' And the Communists take care of them."

*Q: Oh, my God.*

JENKINS: Well, he was a very, very clever man. But he was also very clever in a more positive sense: he cultivated the Taiwanese and supported their involvement, developing close relation with them, and not relying exclusively on the mainlanders resident on Taiwan.

Involving the native Taiwanese brings me to the one real positive development during this period. We Americans helped develop a Joint Commission for Rural Reconstruction (JCRR), headed by Chiang Mon-lin, a former university president on the mainland, an inspired, far-sighted person. In essence, JCRR emulated what happened in Japan back at the time of the late 19th century Meiji Restoration, during which land was taken from the feudal lords and dispensed to the peasantry. Similarly, land was taken from the wealthy landowners in Taiwan and given to the peasants, and the government reimbursed the landlords with government bonds. They became the bankers and the industrialists, just like the Mitsubishis and other feudal lords in Japan back during the Meiji Restoration. This JCRR development laid the foundation for the fantastic economic development that has occurred over the past few decades on Taiwan.

*Q: Well, Karl Rankin was the ambassador.*

JENKINS: He was our ambassador.

*Q: What was your impression of Karl Rankin?*

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JENKINS: My impression was, he was a nice, even handed person, and he was like several other ambassadors with whom I have served, believing that you don't muddy up the waters. I mean they emphasize that this is the policy—the way we're going to do it. To illustrate, I recall one fascinating report prepared jointly by officers of the Political Section. It was a despatch analyzing the feasibility of a military “return to the mainland,” concluding that it was most unlikely. It was drafted by FSO China-language experts and sent up to the ambassador. He recognized a problem, with the “China Lobby” now pretty much in control in the Department. He left the analysis intact but changed the conclusions—this was his report. But the underlying message stood out when it got back to the Department, because the analysis was still there. Ambassador Rankin tried to be fair to his reporting officers and at the same time avoid rocking the boat in Washington. All copies of the report were recalled from distribution by the Department

*Q: Was there any feeling at the time, particularly when you got into the political-military side, that this idea of returning to the mainland just was a non-starter from the very beginning?*

JENKINS: Yes, and I think that most of the political officers, economic officers and most everyone in the embassy felt the same way; but “return to the mainland” like many other slogans of autocratic leaders, seems to help hold things together.

I just read in The New York Times, day before yesterday, about Mr. Wu, an elderly Kuomintang legislator, still taking the line, “We're going to return to the mainland in a few years.”

Such slogans tended to hold the mainlanders together in a disciplined fashion; and they had their impressive military parades, and we trained them and gave them equipment to maintain the unified posture. So, while I think the analysts thought it was a non-starter, I also concluded that it had its politically unifying purpose among the mainlanders.



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*Q: Did you feel under any sort of constraints, at least among the Chinese, not to say, "Oh, come on, fellas, this isn't going to work."? I mean, was this something we talked about among ourselves, but there was no point in displaying our thoughts to the Chinese?*

JENKINS: I'm trying to think if I ever had an opportunity. No, I don't think that we were ever inclined to do that. We wanted our government to know what we felt about the possibility. We had pretty close associations with some people like General Sun Li-Jen and others we had known back during the war, and they didn't seem to believe in the feasibility of a military return to the mainland. But you didn't discuss such things with Chiang Ching-kuo or other inside members of the government.

*Q: What was your impression of Chiang Kai-shek, Madame Chiang and all, as far as their grasp of how to run the government? You know, one always thinks of the tremendous corruption. You've talked about the device of the cliquism. Was there a reform going on within their ranks at that time?*

JENKINS: Well, as I said, it's a very strange source of reform, but Chiang's older son, Ching-kuo, who was, after all, educated in Moscow, took all of the Communist techniques, developed them for the Kuomintang against the Communists. Now that's one side of him. But, as I said, I think under his influence there was a tendency, demonstrated by the JCRR land reform, to compensate the Taiwanese with economic prosperity in exchange for maintaining Kuomintang political and military control. That was my impression by the time I left. And Ching-kuo was very good at it; that was his technique: Cultivate the Taiwanese economically, maintain political and military control.

*Q: Were you there during the sacking of the embassy?*

JENKINS: I left, fortunately, three months before that. But it was the same group that was turning over the diplomats' cars at the fashion show, and I think it was Ching-kuo who was a little bit behind that, too.

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Q: *This was over a...*

JENKINS: It involved an American sergeant who, as I recall, caught a "Peeping Tom" outside his house and shot him with a .45. Wasn't that it, the way you think it was started?

Q: *I think it was something like that, yes. Well, then, you seemed to have a sort of a split personality here. You left Taipei and back again to Berlin. You were there from '55 to '57. What were you doing in Berlin?*

JENKINS: With Berlin, I fought my way back to Germany. Initially I had been reassigned to Hong Kong, and I said...

Q: *I'd like to get a little of the thought process to understand the career. I mean, here you are, you're a junior officer, but not that junior, and you're looking for a career field and all. With your Far East Asian experience, you were trying really to get out from under it?*

JENKINS: Well, I sort of took what Phil Sprouse and Tony Freeman had said as true. When I first went in and wanted to be in China, we had fourteen posts on the mainland, and I could just see my career, three-fourths of it, circulating in these posts in China, in Hong Kong and so forth. But it was quite obvious at the end of the civil war that they were right and there were very few opportunities to serve on the mainland. Al Jenkins, no relation, finally made it back; but that was many years later.

Well, is there an alternative? I thought Germany and Central Europe would be a good alternative, and my first taste of it as Resident Officer bore this out. So I decided to stick with that. I'd had this basic experience with the High Commission and had learned the language.

So they did send me to Berlin, which was wonderful. And I became a member of what was called the Eastern Element of the U.S. Mission in Berlin. The Eastern Element was concerned primarily with East Germany. So fundamentally what we did was, we had

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liaison with the Soviets. We also traveled widely throughout East Germany and spent a lot of time in East Berlin getting a feel for the environment and so forth. But this again was the beginning of a pretty turbulent period in Central Europe, the build-up to the 1956 Hungarian uprising.

*Q: Oh, yes. Well now, first, just a little organizational thing. What was the Berlin mission's relation to our embassy? By that time it was an embassy in Bonn, wasn't it?*

JENKINS: Yes. The Contractual Agreements were formally ratified in 1955.

*Q: How did that work?*

JENKINS: Well, actually the title of the chief of the U.S. Mission in Berlin was that he was sort of the deputy to the U.S. military commander, who was part of the tripartite control of the western allied sectors.

*Q: Tripartite—French, British...*

JENKINS: French, British, and American. Then you had the quadripartite, the Soviets over there. And he was really, formally, to fit into the legal aspect, a deputy to this commander. But he was also, obviously, the liaison with our embassy in Bonn, the political-economic link. He had that function, plus liaison between the U.S. military and the Berlin civilian population and government. There was an economic section, political section, consular section and so forth, but the Eastern Element had a special sort of liaison function and a reporting function regarding developments in East Germany.

*Q: Was it a problem in those days going into East Germany, East Berlin?*

JENKINS: There was no problem whatsoever going into East Berlin. You drove, got on the subway, or walked over from the Kurfuerstendam. And there were a lot of things to do there. I mean, they had one of the best symphony orchestras. They had a fantastic opera and comic opera. They had the wonderful theater, Bert Brecht Theater, on the

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Schiffbauerdamm. And so we went to those a lot, plus several East Europeans cultural and art shops, where you could buy cheaply recordings, manuscripts, art and so forth. We spent a lot of time there; very easy to go back and forth.

Over time, something was developed between the Eastern Element and Soviet representatives in East Berlin. We met with them socially from time to time and there gradually evolved a deal: "Look, we'll give travel permits to each other, tit for tat, so you all can travel any time you want to in western Germany. Just let us know in advance. And then you let us travel in eastern Germany."

And so there was quite a bit of travel. The Leipzig Fair was one of the big attractions, but also we wanted to go to Dresden, to Chemnitz, which was Karl-Marxstadt then. Through such travel we got an intimate feel for the situation in the East.

I think my strongest appreciation of the political and economic climate was obtained on a return auto trip from Austria. It was October, and we purposely stopped in Weimar on the way back to Berlin to have an opportunity to over-night there. Well, we got there thinking we were going to stay in the Premier Hotel Elefant; but it was hosting a conference; so they put us up with a private family. We spent the night in a greenhouse, of all things, and it was right chilly in October. After showing us our "accommodations," the hostess said, "You come up to us after you've had dinner; we are having some friends in." So we went up, and they were all listening to the radio: the uprising in Budapest had started! And they were listening entranced, and that was one of the most fascinating social evenings my wife Laura and I have ever spent abroad.

*Q: You're talking about the October '56 uprising in Hungary.*

JENKINS: October '56 uprising. One minute our hosts would be joyous, and then they would start crying, because they remembered their own failed June 17 (1953) uprising in East Berlin.

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Q; This was in 1953.

JENKINS: Fifty-three, right. And so it was happiness and sadness. They knew the Hungarian uprising wasn't going to succeed. But then they went on talking about their attitudes towards the situation in East Germany; and it was very interesting. There was a dentist there, a druggist, and they were saying, "You know, a lot of good things have happened in East Germany." They praised collective agriculture (none of them were farmers). They thought a lot had been done in education, more people got a chance to be educated for meaningful jobs. They thought that everybody had a job and at least had basic economic security. But then they would turn bitter and say, "But it's those bastards, Ulbricht and his ilk; we can't stand the leadership." So, although they would accept things that were going on, they turned their hatred against the leadership, which I found rather interesting.

*Q: Well, following through on the '56 uprising, I mean, this was a pretty tense time.*

JENKINS: It sure was.

*Q: I was the consular officer in Frankfurt at the time, and I remember we were sort of trying to figure out, well, if this thing really blows up, how to get the American civilians out of there, which were 100,000 in Hesse, I think, or something like that. How did you all deal with the Hungarian uprising and the situation at the time, once you got back, from the Berlin perspective?*

JENKINS: Well, as you say, it was a tense situation, because, although under Khrushchev there had been the Twentieth Party Congress and its criticism of Stalin, the Soviet government under Khrushchev began to come apart. And you didn't have just the Hungarian uprising, you had the Poznan uprising in Poland as well in 1956. And that had to be put down, not by the Russians, but by the Poles themselves. You also had a

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tremendous exodus of young East Germans to the west, and this was a prelude to the Wall a few years later (1961). And so you had a very unstable situation.

But we not only had a pretty good, confident Mission and military, together with the Brits and the French, but also we had a mayor, a very interesting guy named Willy Brandt.

And I remember that on Sunday, right after the Hungarian uprising, I had been “culture-shopping” in eastern Berlin. Driving back, I noticed there was something very, very strange going on. At the Brandenburger Tor and all along the sector border there were armored vehicles with water cannons. The East Berlin Volpos (Volkspolizei), were there with their Tommy guns. And coming down the main road of West Berlin, then called the Seventeenth of June, were hordes of students who intended to march right through the Brandenburger Tor. West Berlin University students, of a very different stripe from what they became some twenty years later. And they were going to go through the Brandenburger Tor to protest what had been done to the Hungarians. Well, I was looking at this, and then I saw a guy get up on a soapbox and stop them and talk to them. It was Willy Brandt. Youthful West Berlin motorcyclists were going by and putting roses in the gun barrels of the Volpos. And those assembled students were ready to go; there were thousands of them. And Mayor Brandt got up on the soapbox and talked them out of it. I gained great respect for Willy Brandt, the future West German Bundeskanzler.

*Q: Because had they gone there, there would have been a slaughter.*

JENKINS: Oh, there would have really been a slaughter. It was a Sunday, and I dashed back in to tell my boss, Dave Henry, and he said, “Write it up.” I did, and he said, “That’s great. Now we don’t have any secretaries or anybody on Sunday, so type it up and you can take it to be transmitted.”

“But Dave, I can’t type.”

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He said, "You can't type? I don't see how you got as far as you have." So he typed it. But it was a pretty good report.

*Q: Well, now, what about your relations with the Soviets?*

JENKINS: Soviet relations in those Berlin days were very, very tentative. We got together merely to bargain about trips and so forth and so on, and talk about things. And they would try to get us drunk with vodka. Sometimes we did drink a little bit too much, and when we had them over, we'd try them out with bourbon and so forth. The relationships basically were an exchange of permits to travel and drunken parties, quite frankly.

*Q: How about your relations with the U.S. military at the time?*

JENKINS: The U.S. military at the time. We all shared "occupation" housing, you know. We lived next door to various military families, and we were all in a community, very close. We had social life together. On policy matters, we would consult with them. We had no disagreements that I recall.

*Q: I'm not sure if he was there at the same time, probably somewhat later, or maybe earlier, Arthur Day?*

JENKINS: Pete Day. No, he wasn't there, but later I replaced him in the Secretariat at the State Department.

*Q: In an interview, he was saying that there were a lot of incidents. Our troops would patrol over in East Berlin, and he reluctantly found that they could trust the Soviet complaints more than they could accept the U.S. military excuse or story. We're talking about sergeants, you know, Jeep drivers getting in incidents. We'd call it today sort of cowboy-like behavior. And this was a real bone of contention. Did you have any of that problem?*

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JENKINS: Quite frankly I don't recall any of that at the time we were there. Berlin sector problems were handled by another section of the Mission. I've forgotten when Pete was there, but I know conflicts became a very real factor in inter-zonal travel later on, including a shooting in Potsdam, as you might recall. But at our time, although they were turbulent times internationally, the main effort of our Eastern Element was zonal analysis: "You give us the right to travel in your zone, and we'll give you permission to visit ours."

*Q: How did you feel, while you were in Berlin at that time, about "the Soviet menace"? I mean, did you feel that this was a pistol that was cocked that might go off at any time?*

JENKINS: Basically, I did not think this nearly as much as I did when I was a Resident Officer (1950-52) when the Korean War started and we reinforced our troops. In our little town of Schwabisch Halle, the U.S. troop strength was tripled. I saw it more as a beginning of turbulence in the Soviet bloc. Not something that would necessarily mean an invasion of the West, but things like putting down the Poznan uprising, the Hungarian uprising, stricter discipline in eastern Germany and so forth. I saw it as a problem that Khrushchev was having, to take what had been a 1956 opening of liberalization—Gomulka replacing Beirut and the reactionaries in Poland, for example. The Soviets were having problems, but I didn't see it as a threat to the West at that time.

*Q: How were relations with the embassy, by the way? Did you find that you were reporting one world and they were reporting another, or were you pretty much in synchronization?*

JENKINS: I don't remember any contradictions. I just think the Eastern Element was seeing things on the ground and reporting it, and I thought that the embassy accepted that first-hand knowledge. I do remember one interesting anomaly. There was some discussion at one of the staff meetings about Yugoslavia as an example of change in the Communist bloc. And then I remember Bernard Gufler, the head of the U.S. Mission, said, "Now, listen, I want everyone to understand there is no difference between Communists. And I don't want anybody in this Mission to be giving the impression that they believe there



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is any difference between Communists.” So there were some people who had a pretty standard view of what the problem was out there.

*Q: Here you were, reporting and all. Did you feel like the CIA was out there fiddling with trying to create unrest? I mean, were they sort of doing their thing and you were doing your thing?*

JENKINS: Well, our thing, remember we weren't working with the economic or political sections of the Berlin Mission. We were focusing on what was happening over there. Yes, I saw a number of things; they did seem to be “fiddling”. There was at this time a huge exodus of young East Germans. And of course there were places all over West Berlin for interviewing the departees. Also, whenever there were political events or parades in East Berlin, there were balloons that would float over with messages from our side. We could see the effort, but I did not feel at that time that they were doing anything excessive to exacerbate a situation that was taking place anyway. Of course, Radio Free Europe (RFE) was pretty well tuned into the situation.

*Q: Radio Free Europe. Well, then you left Berlin in 1957, and I have you, my God, going back to Harvard again. You couldn't get out of there.*

JENKINS: I couldn't get out of there.

*Q: What were you doing there?*

JENKINS: Well, I took the advanced course in international law and relations.

*Q: It sounds like something you'd need like a hole in the head.*

JENKINS: Well, I've got to be very frank; what I was doing was very useful, and I had a number of friends and colleagues who went, too. Actually, I was working on my Ph.D. thesis. We had courses with Kissinger and Brzezinski, who were both professors there at that time, and I would do papers for them, chapters on East Germany that were supposed

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to complete the Ph.D. thesis. But I must confess that when the 1957-58 year at Harvard was over I didn't quite have it finished; and I never finished it. But that's what I was up to there.

*Q: Probably there are more unfinished Ph.D. theses than... Well, then you went to be a political officer at the Department, after a year there, is that right?*

JENKINS: I came back and went to the Executive Secretariat. That was '58.

*Q: Fifty-eight, '59, '60.*

JENKINS: Pete Day was there then, and he and I worked together. They didn't have a twenty- four-hour Operations Center in the Secretariat then. Initially I was the apprentice early-morning top-secret summary editor under Pete. When he left, I took over.

*Q: This was still during the shank-end of the Eisenhower era.*

JENKINS: Yes, and we did the early-morning top-secret summary for the Secretary, with distribution to the White House, Defense and other key agencies. Then we did the afternoon summary for the bureaus, and the monthly bulletin for circulation to the posts abroad.

*Q: Did you get any feel for the Departmental and inter- departmental politics at all in that?*

JENKINS: Yes, I did somewhat. I must confess, however, that basically, since I remained editor for the whole two years of my assignment, and since I had to be in there at 2:30 every morning, I was focusing more on what was happening in the world than on the infighting. I think members of the Secretariat who worked specifically with other departments and with bureaus of State, got a much better feel for this than I did. But you could feel a little interaction.

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*Q: Well, after all, you were editing the document that's going to end up as breakfast reading for the top people in the government.*

JENKINS: Right, I had to watch my spelling.

*Q: Yes. I would think, though, that there would be all sorts of pressures on you to get what people wanted to. I mean, you know, the whole idea is to get the ear of the man or the woman in power. And I would think that you would feel, well, we've got to get this item in or something like that.*

JENKINS: I must confess I didn't feel this. My most poignant memory was of the first early morning I was editor. You sit up there alone in this quiet place. And then these vacuum tube capsules come plopping down carrying embassy cables which you sort out for summary items. Then your two writers, young talented FSOs, come in and write them. After these capsules started plopping down that first morning and I opened one up, I discovered that the king of Iraq had been assassinated.

*Q: This would have been July 14, 1958.*

JENKINS: You got it.

*Q: I was in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, at the time.*

JENKINS: And, boy, then they started falling from all over the Middle East, and it was very, very exciting. But my two writers didn't show. And so I finally called Nancy Rawls's apartment, and the other young male writer...

*Q: She was later ambassador to...*

JENKINS: A post in Africa.

And the young man, who was in the apartment lobby, said, "Well, Nancy isn't up yet."

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I replied, "Well, wake her up and come on in, we've got work to do."

So I was writing Iraq items with one hand and sorting additional stories with the other. Then they arrived and we got it whipped into shape. But that was the big news for the day. That was one of the main crisis situations I remember from those days.

*Q: Well, you then moved sort of a little farther to the east and took Polish training, is that right?*

JENKINS: Yes. During my tour in Berlin, I had driven a car to our Embassy at Warsaw for our Poznan Fair pavilion. I met Dick Johnson there.

*Q: This was Richard...*

JENKINS: Richard E. Johnson.

*Q: There are a lot of different Johnsons.*

JENKINS: He was one of three Johnsons at the Warsaw Embassy then. Richard E. was with the political section. These were very interesting times in Poland, because, as I say, not much earlier there had been a Poznan uprising, and things were moving in Poland. Well, Dick and the visit generally interested me in Poland, and so I applied for language training. And after nine months of language training at FSI, we went to Poznan, Poland.

*Q: You went to Poznan, where you served from 1961 to '63. What were you doing?*

JENKINS: Well, I went to Poznan as the principal officer of the consulate there.

*Q: It is a consulate.*

JENKINS: It's a consulate. It had been formed in Poznan, I think, for two reasons. One was, it had been the center of the uprising that was put down in 1956, and it also is in the

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heart of the Polish western territories, which had been formerly German. It was a very good place to get a feel for the environment and the tendencies in that region.

*Q: What sort of a staff did you have?*

JENKINS: A modest staff, but a very good staff. I had an excellent secretary, Jackie Mathy. And I had a wonderful vice consul, Sol Polansky, who later became ambassador to Bulgaria. And Jerry Verner was the talented USIA vice consul. And then, as for as local employees, it was small, modest. But the first year, we didn't issue a single visa. I was surprised; I thought it would give us much better contact. Finally, we did get permission to issue visas. So it was a small local staff, too, of about three clerical, one being Pani Czaratoryska, who was the wife of Adam Czaratoryski, scion of the old Polish nobility. She's still an old friend. And then a driver and a janitor. And that was it. We had to get another person once we started issuing visas to help us. Small, but a very good staff.

*Q: So you weren't issuing visas for most of the time. How'd you operate? What were your sort of goals and what were you doing?*

JENKINS: I have to preface all this by saying that Americans are very popular with the Poles— everybody has a cousin in Detroit or Chicago; so we did cultivate a lot of friends. And we traveled a lot, made contacts with the yacht club in Szczecin; and the editor of the newspaper there, who was a hunter and invited us to go hunting; and down in Wroclaw (Breslau) was mayor Ostapczuk, and a Politburo member, Wladislaw Matwin. We made very good connections with all these people and many in cultural fields in Poznan as well.

*Q: This was sort of a window of openness, wasn't it, this thing?*

JENKINS: That's right.

*Q: I mean, it began to shut down a little later.*

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JENKINS: Yes. Well, you see, the openness came in the late fifties, and you could already feel it coming down, but there was still, especially in cultural and other fields, much more liberalism than we had detected, say, in East Germany. And, as I say, the Poles were so fond of Americans that... I'll give you one example. Sol Polansky was driving down to Wroclaw in his new Volkswagen which still had oval temporary German plates. It stopped running part way down to Wroclaw and the Poles started coming out of the fields to observe. Sol lifted up the back hood—but he wasn't a mechanic. And they were all looking at him but not offering any help. They spoke to him in German. And Sol kept answering in Polish. Finally one of them said, "You know, you're the first German I've ever met who can speak Polish."

And he said, "I'm not German, I'm American."

"You're an American! Well, come on in, my son is a mechanic, and have breakfast with us."

This contrast, it was amazing.

And so we had easy contacts. We had, of course, our Fourth of July party, we had a Halloween party, we had a Valentine party, and we always had scores of guests. It was terrific.

And at the graduation in the universities...I never will forget the one in, I guess it was '62. We went first to the agricultural university. I was introduced, and they all got up and gave a standing ovation. Not for me personally, but because I was the American consul. So at the next university ceremony, they introduced the Soviet and American consuls simultaneously—there was modest applause. At the third (Technical) university graduation, they didn't mention that either one of us was there.

And then, when the Eastman Orchestra from Rochester came to play at the symphony, I invited the mayor to go with me. We sat down on the second row. Well into the program

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the Eastman Orchestra started playing the "Stars and Stripes Forever." The Poles all got up and marched and paraded and danced up and down the aisles. Very embarrassing for the mayor and I was a little embarrassed, but I enjoyed it.

But this was the atmosphere, explaining one's ability to associate and learn things from the people.

*Q: Well, tell me, I mean, you were there in '61. As I recall, just about '61, we had this, at that time, rather bad incident at our embassy, where a General Services officer had an affair with a Polish woman who was connected to the Polish secret police and all that, and ended up in jail.*

JENKINS: I had almost forgotten about that, but I remember now. It was just before our arrival in Poznan.

*Q: Well, I remember that because I was offered a job to go to Poland to be General Services officer.*

JENKINS: You should have gone.

*Q: Well, it was just after this happened, and I didn't feel like replacing, doing... But how about the feeling about the Polish secret police and all? Because you might have had these other relations, but there was this other side.*

JENKINS: It was always there. And if you were a balanced person, and I think we were and our team was, it was habitual to appreciate that the police were following you en route to Szczecin. You always knew that phones and rooms were "bugged;" you always assumed this when you were talking on the phone or conversing with anyone. And you behaved accordingly. But there were some exceptions, you see, like the General Services officer. And, later, when I went to Warsaw, there were several other cases that had occurred. But we assumed that it would occur.

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I'll give you one example. A very good friend of mine was a Dr. Powiertowski, and he told me, "You know, every time we're together I have to report to the police. Now you know that, so if you don't want to associate with me, don't. But if you know that, then you might know how to behave." And we were both fishermen who enjoyed going fishing together; so we continued association.

We usually knew who they were. I remember we found out some of the key people in the community were actually officers in the UB (Polish Security Service). After learning this, we continued our association with them. Knowing who they were and how they would behave was the important thing. But they were always there.

It was your staff. For instance, Pan Josef was the consulate janitor. And one time there was a break-in in the consulate. He had a dual feeling; I mean, he really protected us a great deal. And he caught the intruder, who was turned over to the police. Well, it turned out that this guy was an UB operative, who was coming in to check and repair the nine mikes in the consulate. And we knew Pan Josef was also UB. But he didn't know the one he caught was UB, one of his own guys. And so the nine mikes were uncovered as a result. You just knew that they (the UB) were there all the time.

*Q: I mean, all of a sudden were dainty Polish women being dangled in front of you or your staff, or something like this?*

JENKINS: Yes. It happened before I got there, but there were some families, who we continued to associate with, who had young men as sons who were sort of cottoning up to our secretary. But, before I got there, the consulate learned who these people were, and so she was extremely careful and didn't associate except when we were all together. But in Warsaw this happened quite a bit.



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*Q: Did you have much contact with, say, Polish officials around there? I mean, did you go talk to them, and did they talk about the situation? Or was it pretty much a pro forma contact?*

JENKINS: Locally, in Poznan itself, it was tough, because we had one of the hardest-line First Secretaries in Poland, and his name was Jan Szydlak. And there was no real communication with him. But if you got to any of the other towns, gradually a pretty good relationship developed. Because it was one of the jobs of those, let's say, in Szczecin, Wroclaw, or Jelenia G#ra, places like that, to get us to accept the western territories as belonging to Poland. And so they would take us on tours and show us the "wonderful things" the Poles had done in this region. So you got quite close to a number of the Party and government officials.

For instance, in Wroclaw, the old Breslau, the mayor was Ostapczuk. He was an extremely liberal guy, he wanted close relations, and he arranged a lot of tours. And one time when I went down on a visit he said, "You know, someone wants to talk to you. You know Matwin, the Party First Secretary?"

And I replied, "Yes, he's also on the Politburo."

He said, "Yes, well, he wants to talk to you."

And so I said, "(gulp) Okay, let's go."

The car came, picked me up, and took me over to... Matwin, a fascinating person. He had graduated from Charles University in Prague. He was one of the very liberal element that had come in with Gomulka in '56. We talked for three hours. He had a desk, and he didn't sit at the desk, it was standup desk. And we talked about the situation in Poland and, you know, not once did he mention anything about Marx or Lenin, but he constantly cited Spinoza, the philosopher. And he was asking me how we liked Wroclaw and this beautiful western territory; but he wasn't grilling me on anything that had to do with American

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politics or military or anything like that. He was again promoting our interest in the western territories.

But as things began to crack down, after I left Poznan and became Polish desk officer in the Department, both Owstapczuk and Matwin were removed by the hard-liners, and the tightening-up process accelerated. Remember, 1961 was Berlin Wall. Poznan is closer to Berlin than it is to Warsaw; and there were ink marks all over the walls and broken windows of our consulate, which happened right after the Berlin Wall went up. So things were beginning to tighten up again while we were there.

And then came the Cuban missile crisis, October '62. It happened, and of all things, we had as our cultural guest Monroe Leaf, who wrote *Ferdinand the Bull*. He was with us, he was our guest and staying with us, and we had a big program at the library for him. But the missile crisis intervened, and only three people showed up. So it was a pretty tense moment.

*Q: I'm interested in this, because I've had some interviews with people who were in Moscow at the same time, where there were crowds, and obviously the crowds were so-called demonstrating against the embassy, but mainly they were concerned and wanted to know what the hell was happening. You know, this was not a hostile crowd, these were very concerned people. What were you getting in Poland at that time? Because it looked like there might be a war.*

JENKINS: That's right, it was tense. And we got reflections from Warsaw, particularly, that they were very concerned there. But I didn't find that the local population or even most officials in our consular district were anti-American or anything like that. They were concerned. And I guess we were all concerned.

We were pretty isolated in Poznan and were living in a three-story consulate building. My secretary had the top floor that looked out over the railroad. I said, "Jackie, you watch and if you see any trains heading west, with a lot of tanks and guns on them, we'll let the

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embassy know.” And I guess it was Carol Brown then who was the vice consul, Sol had moved on. “Carol, why don't you take a car and make a swing down to the south and out to the west, and if you see any real action, we can report it. Meanwhile, Laura and I are going up to Szczecin to the yacht club and tell our friends up there we'd like to take a little cruise.”

In Szczecin they said sure, come on. And we went up, and we went out in a sail boat. Of course, they didn't take us anywhere near the harbor, but they entertained us very nicely with all kinds of Polish ham and vodka. And then, of all things, here we were on a sailing cruise and it started snowing. Here we were, cruising around in the estuary in the snow, and didn't see a thing. But I guess not seeing anything was reassuring. So we came back.

And then the aftermath was, I think, very interesting. We had already put out an invitation to our Halloween party. Usually, as I say, we had eighty or so people there—only six showed up. Five of them we knew were UB, the secret police. One was an innocent student, who as a result got into trouble, but not serious trouble. I later asked him, “Which one do you think it was that turned you in?”

He said, “I think it was that one with the Napoleon hat.” Guests wore costumes to the Halloween party

We knew which one that was.

So that was the first reaction: local citizens were afraid, but they weren't against us.

But the real showdown came a few days later...because I'd already accepted the invitation to the November 7 reception of the Soviet consulate. Well, they didn't think I was going to come, but Laura and I went. And the Soviet hosts were very hesitant, but they had to let us in. So we went up into the reception hall, with all the local leaders and cultural types there. And every time a Pole came up to talk to us, one of the vice consuls would come and say, “Oh, I want to introduce you to this visiting Soviet guest,” and we were isolated.

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Finally, however, Danuta Satanowski, who was a leading actress in town, wouldn't take this sort of thing, and she came over and started talking to us. She wouldn't go away with them. And then she called her husband, who was the director of the symphony orchestra, Satanowski, and he came over and talked to us. Then the university presidents and others came. Pretty soon we were right back in the middle of it.

I'm using this event to illustrate that the Poles were concerned, but they were still very friendly and they were positive.

*Q: Well, it was a difficult time. Did you get any requests from Polish-Americans in the United States about Uncle So and So at this time? I would think that you would be doing a lot of family services for Polish- Americans.*

JENKINS: Well, as I say, the first half of the tour in Poznan, we didn't issue visas or do much regular consular work. We got into a little bit of that in the last half of the tour. But, no, I sensed this much more, later, when I was on the desk and also when I was in Warsaw. But in Poznan, in 1961-62, we didn't have a feeling that we were running errands for Polish-Americans. But later, while I was Polish Desk Officer, 1966 was the millennium of the Polish state and the Polish church. And that was the main focus in the Polish-American community, because it represented the unity of church and state. You had a lot more Polish-American goings-on at that time than you did back in '61 to '63.

*Q: Well, you came back to the Department in 1964, is that it?*

JENKINS: Sixty-three. Oh, then I had to go to the Naval War College.

*Q: You went to the Naval War College for a year, and then you were Polish desk officer, '64 to '66. What were the main things that you did as the desk officer in this particular period of time?*

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JENKINS: I think the two things that stand out most in my mind were: one, the latter half, '66, was, as I say, the millennium of the Polish church and state. And you had a lot of things going on with the Polish-American community in trying to promote the importance of this occasion and how important the church was in Poland, including the Rose Garden ceremonies and so forth.

*Q: Rose Garden at the White House.*

JENKINS: At the White House, yes. And helping edit their speeches. I was rather surprised, because the Polish- American speech writers were depicting Mary as God in Poland. I mean, she was referred to as God. I'm a Methodist, and I said, "Is that really true?" And so they edited it down a little bit—Mother of God.

But this was the dominant thing. And it was also the period when we sent a congressional delegation to Poland that wanted to capitalize on the millennium atmosphere and dedicate a children's hospital down in Krakow. I went over with them as a guide, and observed that there was a great effort by the congressmen to express the feeling of the sympathy on the part of American public for the Polish people. The millennium was one of the dominant features of that period.

The second dominant feature was the problem that began with the crack-down of the Soviets and the Americans on each other. The Soviets had put a lot of areas off limits for American travel in the Soviet Union, and we retaliated. And then we retaliated against the Poles, too, because they were compelled to follow the Soviet example. Certain areas in the U.S. were placed "off limits.". And so they set Lublin, where the Catholic university is, off limits. And this started a series of related problems, because our military attach#s would get into trouble sometimes in these areas. And the Poles then started a series of PNG actions against the attach#s.

*Q: PNG is to make them persona non grata.*

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JENKINS: Yes. And so they would PNG one of ours, meaning their expulsion from Poland, and we'd PNG one of theirs. And this went on and on until they were down to only two attach#s and we were down to four. There seemed to be no way to stop it. Even though I thought we should put this aside and get on with something else, it just kept happening. And the embassy at that time seemed to favor the PNG, "Let's be tough and get rid of them."

So my two years were dominated mostly, I think, by the millennium, the problem of the closed areas and the PNGing of attach#s. And I was sort of glad that I was selected to be DCM in Warsaw to get out of that atmosphere, hoping it would not be getting out of the frying pan into the fire.

*Q: You served in Warsaw as deputy chief of mission, DCM, from 1966 to '70. How did you get the job?*

JENKINS: Well, John Gronouski was appointed ambassador.

*Q: A Democrat under Johnson.*

JENKINS: He was the Postmaster General, and I think Johnson for domestic political reasons wanted to get somebody else into that job. They seemed to conclude, "Gronouski has worked effectively with the Polish-American community. There's going to be a vacancy in Warsaw, let's make him ambassador." As Polish Desk Officer, I had some liaison with him at the time, went over to his office occasionally and so he asked the Department to appoint me as his Deputy (DCM). But Bud Sherer's term was not up in Warsaw, and so it was six months later that I actually went in. The sixties were my Polish years, from '61 to '70, and I was very happy to do it. John Gronouski was a capable, intelligent person, and things were very interesting in Poland at that time. So we hit it off and I served as his DCM from July 1966 until late 1967, when he returned to reenter politics.

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*Q: Well, as a professional Foreign Service officer, one always has a certain reservation about somebody, particularly coming from the political world as Gronouski did, who is of ethnic stock from the country where they are going. There's a tendency to try to return to the homeland, to run for mayor and these things, to turn sort of over-ethnic or something. How did Gronouski work, looking at it with a cold, clear eye?*

JENKINS: He was a very intelligent man who had been a professor. And until he entered politics he didn't fully appreciate that he was Polish—his mother was Irish, and he had been raised as an Irish Catholic. And when Kennedy said he needed someone to help, you know, round up the Polish-American community, he thought of Gronouski. And Gronouski said, “I guess I am Polish.”

*Q: So he didn't really come from a Polish background.*

JENKINS: Well, his father was of Polish heritage, but because of maternal influence, that was not a factor at all with him. I think there was some lack of experience in foreign matters; but he relied on his staff and on me pretty strongly, and it worked out well. But it wasn't like my next ambassador, Walter Stoessel.

*Q: Who was a professional to the core.*

JENKINS: Yes. But with Gronouski it worked out very well. And we experienced some very interesting things, if you want to hear about it.

*Q: Oh, absolutely.*

JENKINS: This was a period, '66, that was beginning to become turbulent again. First of all, it was the Polish millennium, and the church in Poland was exerting itself. They took the Black Madonna icon from Czestochowa and paraded this national symbol throughout Poland. It stirred up the population fantastically. They brought the icon to Warsaw and there was complete turbulence. The day I arrived in Warsaw authorities had confined the

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Black Madonna to St. John's Cathedral. It could be put up in the cathedral, but no parading it around the city. Well, there was a tremendous reaction against this, and mobs surged up the main street, marching towards the Communist party headquarters. Embassy First Secretary Herb Kaiser and I were following along to see what was going on. Well, the crowd was disbursed before they got to party headquarters, but that was the beginning of this turbulent period.

Then there were several other things that occurred. The Vietnam War was on then, and this put the Poles on a spot, because the Poles weren't anti-U.S.; because we were giving them PL 480 assistance, cultural exchanges...

*Q: PL 480 is grain and...*

JENKINS: Yes, grain sales with very long-term credit arrangements, with provisions for use on Embassy expenses, exchanges, joint research, etc. And so they didn't like to be put in this position of being politically boxed-in, with America's fighting over in Vietnam and the possibility of Communist China's joining in...

So they tried to initiate a mediation in '66, which you might have heard of, called "Operation Marigold." Well, it had all started in Hanoi through the initiative of a Pole, who was a member of the international commission (ICC), named Lewandowski. He talked with Ambassador Lodge in Saigon and the Italian ambassador in an effort to identify specific issues on which there could be eventual agreement between Hanoi and the United States. Ten points were identified and the effort to reach agreement was called Operation Marigold. The initial step was to establish contact between Americans and the Vietnamese in Warsaw.

A cable came in from Washington asking our views on becoming involved. In fact, the cable asked: "Mr. Ambassador, do you think your DCM is capable of taking on this job?" Well, Gronouski wasn't there, so I was shown the cable, and I thought, "Well, I hope he thinks so." Gronouski came back to Warsaw the following day and was shown the



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cable. He decided he also wanted very much to be involved in something that could be a tremendous political victory, because he felt it would facilitate a return to Washington to be involved with Johnson in the political world. So he replied, "We'll both do it."

That winter of '66 up until Christmas Eve, we met frequently with Adam Rapacki, the foreign minister, at night, without letting others know what was going on. The frequent evening meetings and reports to the Department were an effort to get an agreement on the ten points that Lewandowski had drafted, and thus put us in direct contact with the Vietnamese. Sometimes I'd get a call right in the middle of a social event, and I'd have to use an excuse—my son cut his hand, or something—and leave; and off we would go to the Foreign Ministry.

But we also had a military policy at that time, I think it was called Rolling Thunder, the bombing campaign.

*Q: Against North Vietnam.*

JENKINS: And one of the ten points of Marigold was a cessation of such bombing. But apparently our administration didn't want to stop the military pressure. Discussion with Rapacki narrowed down and narrowed down towards the end of December to the point of at least leaving Hanoi and Haiphong out of the bombing. But it was too late.

And I can remember so well when Rapacki called us over on Christmas Eve which in Poland is Wigilia. And he said, "You know, this (Christmas Eve) is the most important day in Poland." And this is going to be our last meeting. Why did you bomb Hanoi?" In response to our assurance we would look into the situation, he replied, "No, the Vietnamese will not have anything more to do with it."

Now this isn't to say that the end of Operation Marigold was our fault, but the Poles were really trying to mediate out of their own self-interest, because they wanted to maintain beneficial relations with us. But Lewandowski's and Rapacki's efforts came to naught.

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*Q: Well, what about dealing there in Warsaw with the Soviets? How did we see the Soviets there?*

JENKINS: Well, we saw them, formally, very little. They had a compound that was a fortress; hardly anybody could come in. The ambassador's name was Aristov, who was a member of the CPSU Central Committee, and he was a rather personable individual.

I was charg#, between Ambassador Gronouski and Stoessel, for about seven or eight months, because, as I say, Gronouski wanted to get back into the political campaign in '67, '68, and Stoessel couldn't leave, because of the critical East-West situation, he was Assistant Secretary for EUR, so I stayed on.

But here's the first example of what happened. This was '67, just before the six-day war in Israel, the Arab- Israeli War.

*Q: Yes, October '67.*

JENKINS: There was a big party of the diplomatic corps. My wife and I were dancing, and the Soviet Embassy Counselor and the DCM of the Egyptian Embassy cut in and started dancing around with us in a circle. You ask yourself, what the heck is this about? And they were chanting things like "it's going to be a new world." We didn't know it, but the attack on Israel had already begun. Of course, it turned out very differently from what they thought it was going to be. But this was my first of such contacts with the Soviets—"we're winning; we're going to show you," relapsed into frustration. All Israeli embassies in Soviet Bloc countries were closed down.

But one very interesting sidelight. There was a Polish Nationalist friend of mine, whom I had known in the Polish embassy in Washington, who was in 1967 economic advisor to a high- level official in Warsaw. I won't name him, because he's somewhere in the West now. But he said, "Come over to my boss's house, we're having a little reception, and we're going to talk about the economic situation here." He was late for the event,

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but eventually arrived, breathless. He said, "You know, Walt, the whole situation has changed."

I asked, "How is that?"

He said, "Do you know, the day after the Israeli victory, seven of our embassies abroad raised the Israeli flag along with the Polish flag. That gives us our chance."

So thus began the purge of Jewish elements throughout the government and party. Most of the ministers had been eliminated earlier, but many of the vice ministers, many of the key people were now kicked out. Most of them. Satanowski, the symphony director whom I had known in Poznan, was Jewish, and he left to become the director of the symphony orchestra in D#sseldorf, Germany. A lot of them left, and they were replaced with Polish Nationalist types. This friend of mine was very definitely a Polish Nationalist economist. And so the purge intensified; and nearly all of the Jewish officials were eliminated.

This was a very interesting development, because it began a new Nationalist tendency. Interior Minister Moczar, who had been the Polish guerrilla leader during World War II, led the Nationalist Poles and eventually in 1970 helped eliminate Gomulka, in collusion with Edward Gierek. Gomulka had a Jewish wife, and that's one thing they used against him.

*Q: You know, that story about seven embassies raising the Israeli flag sounds like a put-up thing, doesn't it?*

JENKINS: It does.

*Q: It just doesn't sound very professional. It just looked like this was a good excuse.*

JENKINS: Of course.

*Q: But it doesn't sound like it really happened.*

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JENKINS: I'm not sure whether it actually occurred or not. You see, what happened after World War II was that the Soviets did not really trust the Poles; so they inserted many high-ranking Polish Jews into key positions. The original security minister was a Polish Jew. The Soviets installed them, and the Nationalist Poles were trying to get rid of them. The Israeli flag scenario could very well have been a put-up job. But I do know that many residual Jewish officials were pretty pro-Soviet and knew that they were being protected by the Soviets. And the Soviet Union was not so anti-Israel in the early days. I mean, didn't this begin it?

*Q: I think it began about that time, yes.*

JENKINS: I was charg# then, and I recall going down to the airport to see the PNGed Israelis off. The whole diplomatic corps was there, because most were very fond of the Israeli mission representatives. They were nice guys, and they were the source of most of the useful information at that time, because most were of Polish origin and spoke Polish perfectly. As they were leaving, with the Dutch ambassador as guardian diplomat, going out to the plane, the first secretary, was carrying the diplomatic pouch. And this UB security guard grabbed it away from him and said, "You can't have that," and pushed him toward the plane.

Well, the Texan came out in me and I spontaneously exploded, "Let him alone, you son of a bitch!"

I was called in by the chief of protocol the next day. They were not citing me as making the remark but rather blamed another Embassy officer, who belonged to another agency. Well, I replied, "Did you see what happened out there?"

"Doesn't make any difference, Mr. Jenkins, your political officer should not have done that. It's not according to protocol."

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Well, I said, "Just remember, this shouldn't have been done either."

But they were really rough with the Israelis at that time. It was too bad.

*Q: How about the security efforts against your mission while you were DCM? Because this was really your responsibility.*

JENKINS: Well, before my arrival the Embassy had uncovered the first microphone behind a broken radiator in the DCM's office And then they uncovered overall about ninety.

Also, we had a bit of a problem initially with a security officer who had a rather unusual "sting" technique for exposing suspected security problems, be they sexual vulnerabilities, marine security problems, or other situations. After several such incidents, he was replaced. There was no doubt, however, that the UB made every effort to penetrate our security.

At regular staff meetings I reminded our Embassy members about Polish intelligence efforts to breach our security, including efforts to compromise or entrap our personnel. I always reminded them to immediately report any such incidents.

Well, by gosh, one young officer did come in after one of these briefings and reported, "You know, something strange happened to me. I was down at a well-known restaurant in the old town. And when I came out, there were a couple of young guys there who seemed a bit drunk, but they were very friendly and jovial and invited me up to their house. And so I went with them. They served some more drinks, sat me down, and then they disappeared. But then, all of a sudden, bright lights came on and this rather attractive nude gal came out and tried to cotton up to me. And I ran out, but this is what happened."

Well, I said, "Thank God you did come."

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*Q: What happened? How did we operate? I mean, the young man told about this, and then...*

JENKINS: It was reported. He finished his tour in Warsaw. Everything was all right; we had talked about it, and he continued on to have a career in the Foreign Service.

*Q: Walter Stoessel came. He was ambassador there from '68 to '72, so you had him for the first half of his tour. How did he operate? Was there a difference? I mean, how did he use you, and how did you see him heading an embassy?*

JENKINS: He was a wonderful guy. He was not a person who said, "I've got a lot of views on this, and this should be done, and I think our policy should be so and so." He kept things on an even keel, and very, very professionally. He developed very good relationships with other diplomats and Polish officials, because they really recognized him as a competent professional.

Initially, in speaking Polish he had a Russian accent that I used to tease him about occasionally, but it ironed out.

I think the first experience of how we worked together was a cable that came in from Henry Kissinger in early '69 that said: "It's time to reopen our China talks." (They had been discontinued in the mid 60's due to problems in the Far East, including Vietnam.). "I want you to make contact with the Chinese ambassador to reopen these talks." So we talked about it: How should we do it? Ambassador Stoessel asked, "You speak a little Chinese, don't you?"

I replied, "I've forgotten most of it, but I know a little. I know how to say hao bu hao and so forth." Then I added, "I have a good idea. You know, Mr. Ambassador, the Yugoslavs are going to have a fashion show and party early next week, and everybody's invited. I suggest we both go, and we'll sit at separate tables. But when the Chinese ambassador leaves, at the cloak room, I'll go at the same time and sort of bump into him,

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and 'Oh, excuse me,' and introduce myself. And then I'll tell him, 'I want you to meet my ambassador.'"

"Do you think it'll work?"

I said, "Well, we can try it."

And so we did: Fashion show, cloak room, and I introduced myself. And he was, you know, being very Chinese and bowing hands clasped. I said, "I want you to meet my ambassador." So they were introduced. And then Walter Stoessel said (they found a Chinese interpreter then, I wasn't good enough in Chinese) that he hoped we could meet again sometime soon.

"Hao, hao, hao," (OK), said the Chinese Ambassador.

So we invited them over to our embassy. We didn't put it in the old place, one of the palaces in a park across the way, because we found out that it was pretty well tapped by the Poles. And they showed up at the embassy the following week in one of the biggest black limousines I've ever seen. Anything to be a little bigger than the Russian Zils. They entered and I met them. We had the interpreters and specialists down from Stockholm, who were the China-talks specialists. I had it all arranged with the Marine guards, you know, send us up to the fourth floor to meet with the ambassador in his office. The Marine guard accidentally pushed the wrong elevator button and sent us down to the basement. I think they thought I was kidnapping them at first. But that was rectified, and we went up and had our first meeting. And that was the reopening of the talks with China.

Well, of course, Kissinger was already thinking and had talked a lot...

*Q: He was then the head of the NSC, National Security Council.*

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JENKINS: Yes, that's right. And he probably was already thinking about a Nixon visit to China, and the preparation was underway, you know, in his own mind. He had been talking with a lot of people, including Fairbanks.

*Q: This was John Fairbanks, at Harvard.*

JENKINS: Who had mentioned in a number of talks with Kissinger (of course, they were both at Harvard) that this would be a good opportunity to reopen things with China.

So that's how I remember the reopening.

*Q: Were there any other major problems that you had to deal with while you were in Warsaw?*

JENKINS: Well, I remember another interesting thing while I was charg# (1967-68) in between Ambassadors. There was the Prague Spring.

*Q: Oh, yes, '68.*

JENKINS: In the spring of '68. Oh, there was excitement in Poland. And all along the border you could take boat rides down the Dunajec River bordering on Czechoslovakia, and it was obvious that the Poles were just so envious. And, among other things, there was the reaction this Prague Spring had on the other East European countries.

One specific instance I remember was the dinner party given by Romanian Ambassador Petrescu for departing Mexican Ambassador Ju#rez, who was a grandnephew of Benito Ju#rez. And he had invited the Russian Ambassador Aristov and his wife, Laura and myself, and Argentine Ambassador and Mrs. Tavrel. So we went. And towards the end of the dinner, the Romanian ambassador was perspiring, but he had instructions, so he recited a toast to Mexican Ambassador Juarez, saying, "You know, Mr. Ambassador, your country and my country share the same experience. We're both adjacent to great powers,



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and we both share a fear and the pressures of these great powers.” Well, Mrs. Aristov began to twitch and excused herself from the table. Then Petrescu went on to say, “So I say farewell to you. Welcome back to your home in Mexico. I hope everything will be okay.”

Well, the Mexican ambassador replied, “You're absolutely right, Mr. Ambassador, we both live next to huge superpowers. But if you gave me a hundred dollars for every American soldier on my border, and I gave you one dollar for every Soviet soldier on your border, you'd make a lot more money than I would.”

Ambassador Aristov left the table.

Well, after dinner, Juarez invited us over to his residence along with the Argentineans. We went down to the lower level social room and over to the bar. Up behind the bar was a pistol in a holster. I said, “Who did that belong to?”

“That's Pancho Villa's.”

And then he pulled out a machete and slapped it down on the bar several times, offering us a drink. “Now I want to tell you what I really think about the United States.”

So I got Pancho Villa's pistol and put it down by the machete. I said, “Go ahead.”

He said, “You all shouldn't be fooling around in Eastern Europe. You should be back home taking care of the problems there.”

But this was another Russian experience. They were undergoing an awful lot by 1968.

*Q: Tell me, what was your estimate when you were there— we're talking about the '66 to '70 period—of the value to the Soviets of the Polish forces in the Warsaw Pact?*

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JENKINS: I think they had no great illusions about the loyalty of Polish forces. The Soviets only had two divisions stationed in Poland, but those were for the security of the main transportation lines through Warsaw and Poznan and Wroclaw over to East Germany, where they had twenty divisions. So the importance of Poland, which had always been the "parade ground of Europe" throughout history, was as communication link to their real basic position, anchor in Europe, which was in East Germany. So I think this was their principal feeling about the importance of Poland as part of the Warsaw Pact. I suppose Jaruzelski, who was the commander then and had been trained in the USSR during the war, was the securest guy they could think of, but they had no illusions about the dependability of the Poles.

That's one reason they're not getting out of Poland now as fast, because of their troops still in East Germany.

*Q: Were there any other events that we haven't covered during this Warsaw period?*

JENKINS: I think that's basically it. The things I remember the most were, as I say, the Arab-Israeli War, the Prague Spring, and the reopening of the China talks.

*Q: Were you there, or were you by any chance on leave or something, during the suppression of Czechoslovakia?*

JENKINS: Oh, yes, that's another. I almost forgot that one. No, I was still charg#.

*Q: The Polish forces went in, didn't they?*

JENKINS: Well, I was sitting there in the embassy, and Herb Kaiser, the first secretary, and his family were going on a trip north to the Masurian Lakes. And when they got to a little town about forty miles out of Warsaw, they were stopped by the UB, the security police, and told to go home, back to Warsaw. Well, during ten years, I knew we were

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stopped frequently by the security, but we were never told to go back. And I said, "Herb, you stay right there. And I'm going in to the Foreign Ministry right away and protest."

So I went in. They received me. I remember it was Dobrosielski who had the American desk then. And I said, "You know, Herb Kaiser, my first secretary, is out in Plonsk, and he's been told to come back to Warsaw, by the police."

And he said, "Oh, that can't be true."

So, with me there, he got on the phone and called the Ministry of Interior and said, "You know, I have the American charg# here, and he says his first secretary was told to come back to Warsaw. And I'm just about to tell him that...oh, you mean, he is supposed to come back? Oh," he hummed, "yeah, he's supposed to come back."

Well, this was the first indication that the Soviet troops were coming in through eastern Poland to go down to the Czech border. So I told Dobrosielski, whom I'd known quite well, "Well, you're going down to the Tatra Mountains for a month's vacation. I want you to please be very careful—you might be run over by a Soviet tank."

He said, "Oh, no, Mr. Jenkins, no."

He came back in September. I met him at a reception, and I said, "What did I tell you?" The invasion had already taken place.

He said, "Mr. Jenkins, it was worse than that. It was a Polish tank."

And so the Polish forces did go in.

But the Polish reaction was very interesting. We had a petroleum project in Plock and a Central Committee member, who was head of their petroleum industry, was there. And the armies crossed the Czech border. He called the American engineer in and asked, "Hey, I have here the New York Herald Tribune and I have the Trybuna Ludu." (Their Party

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paper.) "Trybuna Ludu says 'invitation.' The Herald Tribune says 'invasion.' Now which is it?"

And the American engineer hemmed and hawed a little bit, "It looks pretty much like an invasion to me."

"By gosh, I think you're right. Because, especially if you're invited in as a guest, you don't move the furniture around."

But this was a typical Polish reaction, you know. And Dobrosielski was sorry about it as was this Central Committee member that we were involved with; but they did go in.

*Q: Were there any reactions on our side? I mean, did you make any protest or anything such as that?*

JENKINS: About the invasion?

*Q: About the invasion.*

JENKINS: I had very close liaison with several ambassadors, particularly the British ambassador, and we exchanged information a lot. But I got the definite feeling, I must confess, that we didn't want an invasion then, during Vietnam, and we didn't really want to think there was going to be an invasion. Even some of our attach#s were late in saying that this was really going to be an invasion, because we got the definite impression from Washington, and the British ambassador did, too, that this was a busy time and we didn't want to be involved. I mean, Vietnam was still very big, and we don't want to get into a mess here. So actually it wasn't until the last minute that we really thought that they were going to invade. So we didn't go in protesting or anything like that beforehand, of course. And even afterwards, let's not rough-up the waters. I mean, we've got enough to do out in Vietnam, and just let it go.

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*Q: Well, you left Warsaw in 1970, is that right?*

JENKINS: I left Warsaw in the summer of 1970, right.

*Q: And came back to the Office of Scientific Affairs?*

JENKINS: Yes.

*Q: What were you doing there?*

JENKINS: Well, in SCI, the Office of Scientific and Technological Affairs, I was mostly involved in European agreements, joint programs, particularly Eastern Europe, but also the NATO science committee.

We went to Yugoslavia to renegotiate the PL 480 agreement, which was used to finance joint scientific research. There was only six million dollars' worth of local currency left in the pot. And Norman Neureiter, who was with the President's Science Advisor's Office, and I negotiated an agreement whereby they would match our six million, making a local currency equivalent of twelve million dollars to be used for scientific and technological cooperation in Yugoslavia. Such joint use meant that they wouldn't have to pay it back in dollars.

I did the same thing in Poland, and then went with our delegation to Moscow in the spring of '72 (snowed almost every day for six weeks), negotiating the U.S.- Soviet cultural exchange agreement, my part of which was science and technology.

And we were after one thing in particular. They had a pretty advanced electrical energy project on what is called magneto hydrodynamics, MHD. They had put a lot of money into it. And it was one of the things, along with fusion, that we were looking into as a future source of energy. And we wanted to work out an agreement which assured our full access

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to the results of their research. They were adamant, and it is what held up the whole agreement for six weeks, my little section of the accord

Finally, they caved. And I felt so proud of myself. I mean, here we'd negotiated MHD and got something to our advantage. And we flew back home.

That same weekend, I got a call from my old friend Norman Neureiter, at the White House Science Advisor's Office. He said, "Walt, I have just come back from Korea. I got a telephone call and the White House wants me back now. We've got to negotiate a new science agreement with the Soviet Union."

"But, Norm, I just finished doing that."

"Yeah, I know, but I was told to come back, and you've got to come over to make plans, and we're going to talk with them."

So we met with the Soviet Embassy science counselor in the State Department. And I was sticking to the same things, including MHD, I wanted to get in the Moscow agreement. And the counselor said, "Can't do it." And finally he said, "I am going back to tell my ambassador that you are disobeying the agreement between your Secretary and him."

Well, this was the first we ever knew that Kissinger had made an agreement with the Soviet ambassador. It turned out that there was to be a series of agreements on space, science, technology, environment, and other things— for different people to sign during President Nixon's upcoming summit meeting. The Secretary of State would sign one, the President would sign another, and so and so would sign the next one. So we had to renegotiate separate agreements on these various fields, to be taken and signed at the upcoming summit trip to Moscow. So we learned, through the back door, that we were supposed to negotiate new agreements. Which we did. These became our still-valid science and technology agreement with the Soviet Union.

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*Q: That must have pretty well taken up most of your time.*

JENKINS: It took a lot of time. But then, the last year, I went to Geneva for the CSCE, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, where I was the deputy and alternate head of the U.S. delegation, responsible substantively for science and technology and environment. So I had ten months in Geneva, negotiating those...

*Q: How did you feel about that negotiation? At that time did it seem like sort of a secondary thing while Kissinger was working on other arms control things?*

JENKINS: Well, we did have pretty close relations with the boys over in the arms control negotiation, including Paul Nitze. And, yes, I had a feeling definitely...not that I personally felt it was secondary, because I was working closely with the cultural group, and I was trying to weave into our science and technology all of the things about open contacts and sharing of information that they had in the cultural. But I got a feeling that, back home again with Secretary Kissinger, this was not a primary interest.

*Q: Yes, well, I've gotten this in some other interviews, too, that later this turned out to be a far more important thing than at the beginning he had planned it to be, or really anybody else had. I mean, it became a primary thing. But at that time it was given a rather soft pedal, I guess.*

JENKINS: Oh, very much so. And I remember we'd have periodic meetings with the Russians, separately. And the way we learned what the flavor was in all of these things was not from our instructions from the Department, but from the Russians.

*Q: George Vest, who was later in Helsinki, was saying that he was finding out actually through the East Germans, who were getting it from the Soviets who were coming around, and, you know, it was a very difficult period.*

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JENKINS: Oh, sure. And he was my first boss. But it was very much that way. The French didn't think it was terribly important. I think some of the others did, and certainly the Swedes and the Swiss and other "neutrals" thought it was terribly important. Because they were coming in along with the East Germans.

I finished the science and technology and environment portions which were initialed, and left to become consul general in Stuttgart. But later I found out that my initialed agreements in those fields had been changed in a compromise with the Soviets to get agreement on the entire CSCE package.

*Q: You were in the Office of Scientific Affairs from 1970 to...?*

JENKINS: From 1970 to '74.

*Q: And then you were consul general in Stuttgart from when to when?*

JENKINS: From '74 to '78 I was consul general in Stuttgart, in what I consider is one of the nicest consular districts there is. It included Heidelberg, Lake Constance, Baden-Baden and the Black Forest. Furthermore, it's where all of our major military commands were located. The European Command, EUCOM, was just outside Stuttgart; the Seventh Corps was in Boblingen, near Stuttgart; the Seventh Army was headquartered in Heidelberg. And so we had a very close relationship with the military.

The way I would like to start out with Stuttgart is to hark back to my Resident Officer days in Schwabisch Hall, which isn't too far from Stuttgart. When people asked me then did I think that democracy was really going to work in Germany, I tended to be rather positive by the end of my Schwabisch Hall tour. I felt that: (1) if national security was assured, (2) viable democratic institutions were developed, and (3) a reasonable prosperity developed, Germany might make it, in a generation or two, and really become democratic, maybe not exactly the way we are.



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And my tour in Stuttgart, although maybe it's too localized, sort of convinced me that I was right. We did have this American security presence working together with the German effort. We had one of the most prosperous regions you can imagine, with Daimler-Benz, Porsche, Robert Bosch, IBM, and all the machine tool and electronic companies located in that region. It was a pretty booming place. And also the political institutions seemed to be working. You know, you had three parties, but basically the Socialists (SPD), the CDU and the FDP. You didn't have a lot of little splinter parties as in Italy and France at that time; it was working well. The federal relationship was working very well between Bonn, Baden-Württemberg and the other states. So I sort of felt that, gee whiz, maybe I was right. But this has only been two generations between Schwabisch Hall and the present; let's see what happens from now on.

Americans developed close relations with the Germans. We had a lot of friends, particularly in "the upper crust." They seemed to cultivate the commanders of our forces and our consul general.

However, all wasn't a bed of roses. At that time, one of the outstanding attention getters in Germany was the Bader-Meinhof Gang, which later became the Red Army Faction. Now these young terrorists, strangely enough, mostly came from around the Baden-Württemberg area. Sons and daughters of Calvinistic elements who were very puritanical and who "knew what was right." They were nearly all well educated. And they had turned to terrorism as a way of expressing their frustration and point of view.

So, they came and were operating mostly in our consular district. Most of them, when they were caught, were put in jail in the Stuttgart area too, in Stammheim. So we had quite an intimate contact with the Bader-Meinhof environment.

Of course, they did wound U.S. General Fritz Klosson, the commander of the Seventh Army in Heidelberg, in his car on his way to work. And our own security was very, very tight. But actually I began to see developing an approach to even difficult situations like

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this that reinforced my feeling that, given a continuation of good conditions, democracy was developing well in Germany.

At first, the courts had a frustrating time with the Bader-Meinhof. They didn't know which way to go. They didn't want to be too tough, like the Nazis had been, and they didn't want to be too wishy-washy. And yet quite often they were wishy-washy, you know, insufficient evidence, etc. But, finally, in this two-year period when they were the most active, the courts developed a very well-balanced, fair, not oppressive way of dealing with this type of crime. They were very uncertain and unsure of themselves at the outset, but much more confident and just at the end.

A second thing that impressed me was that the press and the media had a very different way of dealing with the Bader-Meinhof than, say, our press would. Without censorship, but doing it on their own, when Schlier, the national head of the German equivalent of our Chamber of Commerce, was kidnapped and killed, it was put on page three. The Gang rarely gained the advantage of being front page, which is what they really wanted to be. And this was the initiative of the people in the press and television themselves.

Another thing that I saw developing in Germany that interested me, taking another one of the three economic prosperity elements, was that, whereas you had free enterprise, you had a much closer relationship between government and industry, and between industry and labor than we're used to having here in the U.S.

I'll never forget, I was sitting down with fellow Rotarian, Prof. Dr. Joachim Zahn, then the director of Daimler-Benz, when he got a phone call from a colleague up in the Ruhr. And he came back to the conference room absolutely furious. He said, "You know what they've agreed to up there in Bonn, and this industrial leader friend of mine agreed to it, is Mitbestimmung!" That means "co-determination"—trade unions would be taken onto the executive boards of the industries and they would work together. Well, Zahn was against this at Daimler-Benz, but it became the norm and they all got used to it.

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Another was when there was going to be a big negotiation, say, between the steel workers and the industry. I'd have lunch with the head of the steel workers' union. He'd say, "Well, I know these are difficult times, we're just coming out of the '74-75 recession, but we're going to ask for an eight percent raise. They're going to tell us they can't do more than two percent. But we're going to compromise on five percent." The next week, I had lunch with the local head of the industry for steel. He said, "We have it pretty tough, you know, that guy's a hard-nosed so and so, but we're going to say, 'In the wake of this recession nothing can be done—two percent.' And they're going to ask for eight. And we're going to compromise on five." And so, you know, it was all sort of a sense of what was going to happen. They knew each other well.

Again with Zahn and Daimler-Benz, during the recession he said, "What on earth is going on in America? Your General Motors has laid off 20,000 workers. That's terrible. We never lay off workers. We put them on Kurzarbeit." (That means half pay.) "And the government picks up the other half, and that tides us through a recession. I can't understand why you'd...."

So what I'm saying is, it isn't the old corporate state, but there's a much closer relationship and cooperative relationship between government, industry, and trade unions than we're familiar with in the States.

Those were my principal impressions of Stuttgart— outside of a wonderful four years.

*Q: Well, looking back on it, if a young man or a young woman came to you and said they were thinking of going into the Foreign Service—I mean, obviously it's changed a lot today from when you came in, but how would you reply?*

JENKINS: My strong inclination is to reply that a future in the Foreign Service could be great. In other words, I base that premise on the fact that the predominant military and intelligence emphasis is going down in significance; and now is the chance for us to be

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out in the world economically, culturally and informationally; so the career could be great. That's my first inclination.

But then I watch things, and I watch the Gulf, and I watch...

*Q: You're talking about the war against Iraq in the Persian Gulf.*

JENKINS: Yes. And I'm not so sure that what I just said is bound to be true. I'd also see, every time I went into a State Department office recently (I was with CDC the declassification area for quite a while in the department after retirement), I'd go in to consult with young officers, frequently the desk officer, glued to word processor and computer, and to be told by the secretary that he was busy right then, completely absorbed by this stuff on the screen. Of course, I remember, way back then, first the legal-sized dispatches, then the airgrams, and then the cables. But I wonder; I'm not sure. In this world of fast communications, when Secretary of State Jim Baker gets so and so on the phone and talks directly, or the president does, it might be a different Foreign Service—glued to the word processor?

I think there would be many great things for a young person to do in the economic, cultural, informational, and reporting fields. Because I am strongly convinced that the guys in the consulates in Iran knew more about what was going on at the time of the Shah and Khomeini than they did in the military mission in the embassy.

I know very well that when I was in Poznan, we knew more about what was going on, and the mood of the people during the Cuban missile crisis than they did in Warsaw.

So I think there are great opportunities—if the system and the bureaucracy doesn't throw them out the window or through the computer screen. That's my view.

*Q: Well, I want to thank you very much. This has been delightful.*

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JENKINS: Well, I've enjoyed it. I always enjoy rambling on about my view of things.

End of interview